

## ADAMS POINT NEIGHBORHOOD

**Typology:** Urban Residential

**Location:** Oakland, Alameda County

**Size:** Approximately 175 acres or 0.27 square miles

### A. District Boundaries and Location

As seen in Figure 3-2, the Adams Point pedestrian district is located just north of Lake Merritt, approximately a half mile from downtown Oakland. This pedestrian district encompasses the entire Adams Point neighborhood, which stretches from Grand Avenue to the south to Interstate 580 (I-580) and MacArthur Boulevard to the north and east. The district is bounded on the west by Harrison Street and Oakland Avenue, which merge into a single roadway for a portion of the boundary.

Residential neighborhoods are located to the north, east and west of the district. The Grand Avenue shopping district begins at the southeastern corner of the neighborhood, on the far side of the Interstate. Lake Merritt creates the southern boundary and provides a major amenity and destination for the district. Commercial office buildings at the edge of downtown Oakland begin just southwest of the district.

### B. District Overview

Figure 3-2 shows district boundaries, primary paths of pedestrian travel, major attractors and transit stops in the district vicinity. These are discussed in more detail below.

#### I. Built Environment

Development in the district is dense, with most buildings between three and four stories, although some apartment buildings near the lake rise as high as



*Streets in the Adams Point neighborhood are tree-lined and have traffic calming measures such as speed bumps; many also provide great views of Lake Merritt.*

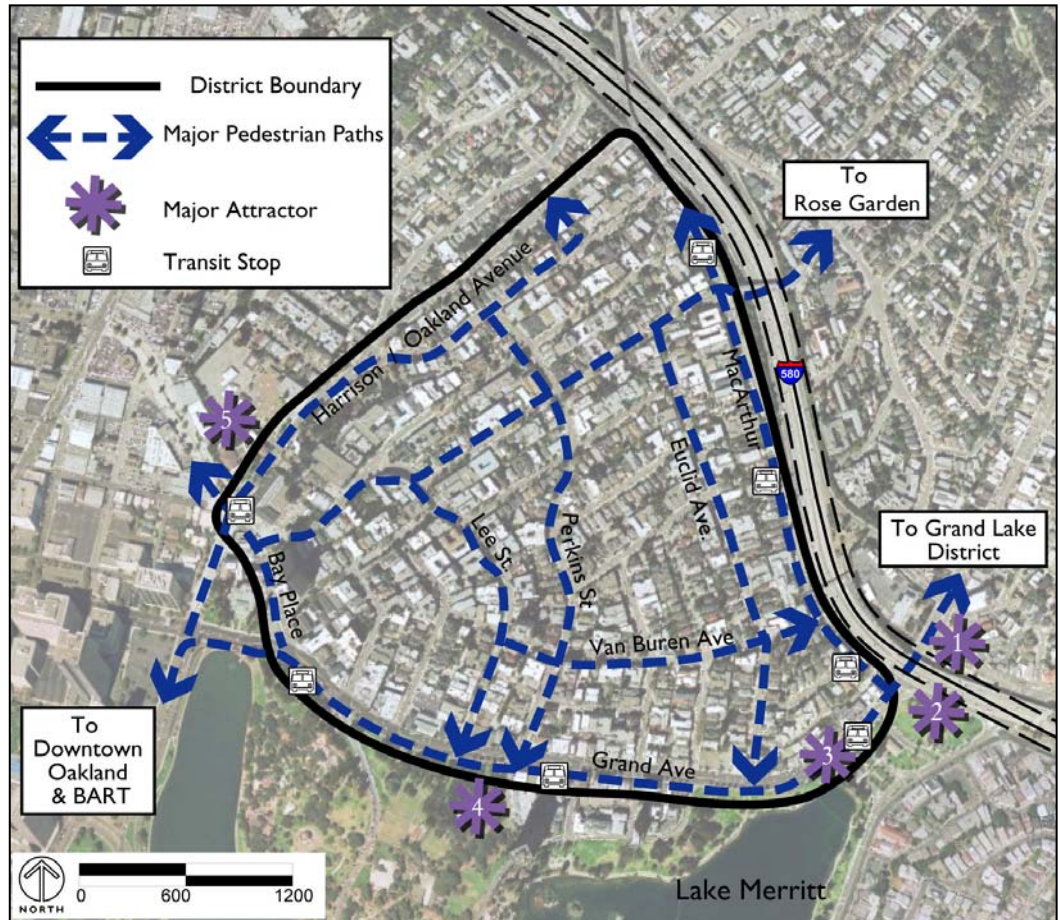


Figure 3-2: Adams Point Pedestrian District

eight floors. Adams Point is a high-density residential neighborhood comprised mainly of mid-rise apartment buildings with a few townhouses and single-family homes scattered throughout the district. There is a concentration of retail uses at the intersection of Grand Avenue and MacArthur Boulevard, and intermittent businesses along the length of Grand Avenue.

## 2. Major Attractors

The key attractors in the area that generate pedestrian traffic are shown on Figure 3-2 as numbered below:

1. The Grand Lake District, a retail district that includes a movie theater and many shops and restaurants, is located just beyond the district, east of I-580. Lakeview Elementary School is located at the edge of this retail district and also draws a great number of pedestrians.
2. A Park-and-Ride lot, which provides a casual carpool site, is located under I-580 next to Splash Pad Park where a popular farmers' market takes place every Saturday.
3. Retail on Grand Avenue also draws pedestrians to and from the district. It is densest between MacArthur Boulevard and Euclid Avenue, but continues sporadically along the length of the street.
4. Lake Merritt, the surrounding park and a children's attraction called Fairyland are major generators of pedestrian traffic.
5. Westlake Junior High School, located just outside the district to the northwest, is attended by many local students who walk to the site.

### 3. Transit Service

Six AC Transit bus lines (three local lines, two combined local and transbay lines, and one rapid bus transbay line, with additional improvements to the transbay service expected) serve the Adams Point neighborhood, primarily along Grand Avenue and MacArthur Boulevard. The local lines have 15 to 20 minute headways during commute hours and 30 to 60 minute headways at other times. The neighborhood is also within a half mile of the 19<sup>th</sup> Street BART station, which provides 7 minute headways during commute hours and 15 to 30 minute headways at other times.



*Lake Merritt is a key attractor in the area. Its walking paths, with views of downtown, provide an important recreational amenity.*



*Retail shops, west of the Grand Avenue/MacArthur Boulevard intersection. Decorative lighting, wide sidewalks and retail awnings create a comfortable walking environment while diagonal parking increases access.*



#### 4. Pedestrian Paths of Travel

Given its grid of roadways, pedestrian traffic in the district is fairly dispersed. The neighborhood has four primary pedestrian routes around the outside of the district and six within it. As noted in Figure 3-2, Grand Avenue runs along Lake Merritt at the southern boundary of the district and provides access to BART and downtown Oakland. Harrison Street/Oakland Avenue is the western boundary of the district and links to Grand Avenue via Bay Place. Bay Place is the third route on the periphery of the district and leads to Westlake Junior High School. There is also considerable pedestrian traffic on MacArthur Boulevard, which is the southeastern border of the neighborhood and connects to the Grand Avenue retail.

Figure 3-2 also shows six primary pedestrian routes within the district (Perkins, Lee and Adams Streets, and Orange, Van Buren and Euclid Avenues), which provide direct access to amenities at the edges of the district, including bus stops along Grand Avenue.



*Grand Avenue is four lanes wide with a center-turn lane, bike lanes and on-street parking. Although the roadway was narrowed in the 1990's, traffic still moves quickly.*

#### C. Planning History

The Adams Point neighborhood became a high density, walkable neighborhood in the 1920s when early apartment development was integrated into an existing neighborhood of grand single-family homes built after the 1906 earthquake. The neighborhood experienced a second boom of apartment and condominium construction in the 1960s and 70s, which resulted in the tallest buildings in the district. After this building boom, Adams Point residents became unhappy with the construction of large and often unattractive buildings, as well as the

associated impacts on parking, which is quite limited in the area. Neighborhood residents successfully advocated for restrictions on condominium conversions, building design and parking requirements as well as having sections of the neighborhood down-zoned to limit residential densities.



*Located on Harrison Street just outside of the district, Westlake Junior High School attracts many pedestrians in the morning and afternoon, for whom the speeding traffic on Harrison Street create a safety hazard.*

Neighborhood residents have also expressed concerns about the speed of traffic on the streets around the Adams Point neighborhood, including Grand Avenue, Harrison Street/Oakland Avenue and Bay Place. Pedestrian advocates wanted to narrow these streets to slow traffic and remove the barrier to the lake and other neighborhoods created by these large arterial roadways. Although there was some neighborhood concern about creating traffic congestion, both Grand Avenue and Bay Place have undergone improvements, including narrowing, restriping and building or painting medians, to slow traffic. However, challenges to pedestrian walkability remain. Many streets intersect both Bay Place and Grand Avenue at odd angles, creating long pedestrian crossing distances. In addition, signaled intersections are coordinated for vehicular convenience, resulting in long wait times for pedestrians. These long waits often result in jay walking, a behavior that is particularly dangerous on Grand Avenue where fast moving traffic may not expect pedestrians in the roadway.

Harrison Street and Oakland Avenue also have significant traffic volumes and recently there has been some advocacy to turn both Oakland and Harrison into two-way streets, rather than the one-way couplet configuration that is now used near the freeway connection.

#### D. Regulatory Framework

The Adams Point pedestrian district is currently zoned R-50 Medium Density Residential or R-60 Medium-High Density Residential everywhere except on Harrison Street and Grand Avenue, which have sections that are zoned C-30 District Thoroughfare Commercial. The residential zoning designations require design review on most new buildings. The goal of both residential zoning designations is to allow attractive apartments at relatively high densities in some portions of the district and to prohibit higher density housing elsewhere. As mentioned previously, residents advocated for this R-35 down-

zoning in some places over concerns that the neighborhood was too dense and parking too difficult. The commercial zoning allows a mix of uses, including residential units, and has a maximum FAR of 3.0. Design review is also required in most instances. The entire district is also subject to a S-12 Residential Parking Combining Zone overlay that has stringent parking regulations, also as a result of resident advocacy efforts. Some areas are further subject to the S-4 Design Review Combining Zone overlay which requires additional design review.

Grand Avenue meets the requirements of a transit street in Oakland because it has Transbay service and one-quarter to one-half mile distances between bus stops. This designation results in signal coordination through a signal management plan and may result in bulb-outs being installed on Grand Avenue to smooth bus travel.

#### E. Key Findings

This section explores the key factors that contribute to the area's success as a pedestrian district and factors that continue to create challenges. They are based on field observations as well as interviews with City of Oakland Planning Department staff.



*Flowering trees in a narrow landscaped border between the sidewalk and traffic on Orange Avenue make the street comfortable and pleasant for walking.*

The following factors have the greatest impact on creating this pedestrian district:

- ◆ The high residential density of the district results in a large number of residents using the streets.
- ◆ Proximity to major attractors, including the Grand Lake retail district, Downtown Oakland, BART and Lake Merritt facilitates walking as a primary mode of transportation.
- ◆ Extensive landscaping makes the streets attractive and interesting to pedestrians.
- ◆ Speed restrictions on residential streets slow traffic and ensure safety and comfort for pedestrians.
- ◆ Narrowing Grand Avenue from six lanes to four lanes, with a center turn and bike lanes, dramatically improved pedestrian safety and connections to Lake Merritt.



*The residential uses in Adams Point are located well within walking distance of downtown Oakland, Lake Merritt and the Grand Lake district.*

While the district currently operates well as a pedestrian district, a few changes or improvements could be made as described below.

- ◆ Individual streets within the district could be enhanced with street trees, additional crosswalks or traffic calming measures to further reduce speeds through the neighborhood.
- ◆ Pedestrian facilities along MacArthur Boulevard could be improved, including more street trees and further buffering from high traffic volumes, particularly at the Grand Avenue intersection.
- ◆ Pedestrian scale lighting to increase evening commuter safety
- ◆ The arterial streets bordering Adams Point are also barriers to pedestrian travel. While Grand Avenue and Bay Place have been significantly improved in recent years, additional upgrades such as refuge islands and

more signalized crosswalks would further improve all four of the adjacent streets.

- ◆ Some vacant storefronts exist on Grand Avenue. More shops and a greater mix of retail uses would make the retail corridor within the district more appealing and usable for pedestrians.

#### **F. Pedestrian Environment and Facilities**

The following section describes the district's pedestrian environment in detail by focusing on the primary paths of travel. The pedestrian facilities along each major roadway are identified.



## I. Grand Avenue

<b>Type of Roadway:</b>	Arterial
<b>Roadway Width:</b>	80 to 90 feet
<b>Speed Limit:</b>	30 mph
<b>Average Roadway Speeds:</b>	30 to 45 mph
<b>Parking:</b>	On-street, diagonal and horizontal
<b>Sidewalk Widths:</b>	10 to 17 feet (10 feet average)

### Pedestrian Facilities:

- ◆ Park running along the majority of the avenue's south side
- ◆ Street trees
- ◆ Pedestrian-oriented, decorative lighting fixtures
- ◆ Signalized crosswalks with countdown signals at MacArthur Boulevard, El Embarcadero, Euclid Avenue, Perkins Street, Staten Avenue, Park View and Bay Place intersections
- ◆ Unsignalized crosswalks at all other intersections
- ◆ Covered bus stops
- ◆ Retail awnings
- ◆ Directional signage
- ◆ Trash cans

Grand Avenue is the most-used pedestrian route in the district as residents use it to access the retail area, Lake Merritt, downtown Oakland, BART and AC Transit bus lines. Pedestrian activity takes place throughout the day, with morning and afternoon commute peaks. Although Grand Avenue is a wide road with a lot of fast moving vehicle traffic, signalized crosswalks are located at most intersections to allow safe pedestrian crossing. Other unsignalized crosswalks indicate the presence of pedestrians but are often insufficient to slow traffic.



*Shops are spread intermittently along Grand Avenue, creating a draw for pedestrians along the entire length of the street. This is important to maintain liveliness and safety in the district.*



*A new bus shelter at the entrance to Fairyland, at Park View Terrace and Grand Avenue. The crosswalk is signalized to assist pedestrian crossings.*

## 2. Harrison Street/Oakland Avenue

<b>Type of Roadway:</b>	Regional Corridor, one-way couplet above Orange
<b>Roadway Width:</b>	50 to 80 feet
<b>Speed Limit:</b>	30 mph (25 near School)
<b>Average Roadway Speeds:</b>	30 to 45 mph
<b>Parking:</b>	Horizontal, on-street
<b>Sidewalk Widths:</b>	7 feet average, 17 feet in front of the school

### Pedestrian Facilities:

- ◆ Street trees
- ◆ Yellow pedestrian signs near crosswalks
- ◆ School zone designation (flashing lights, crosswalk and signage)
- ◆ Standard overhead street lights
- ◆ Turn-outs for the school drop-off site
- ◆ Public plaza with benches at school
- ◆ Signalized crosswalks at Bay and Perry Places; unsignalized crosswalks at Orange and Pearl Streets, Fairmont Avenue and mid-block at the pedestrian path/Oakland Avenue intersection

Harrison Street/Oakland Avenue is a very busy regional corridor with access to I-580. High vehicle volumes and speeds on the wide street, particularly during commute hours, reduces its appeal and safety for pedestrians. However, the roadway provides a pedestrian connection to two major attractors, Westlake Junior High School and downtown Oakland. Speeds are somewhat reduced within the school zone where traffic fines are doubled. Pedestrian traffic falls off at the northern portion of Harrison Street/Oakland Avenue where the streets function as a one-way couplet. However, many people do access Oakland Avenue from a pedestrian path (pictured on page 12) that leads from Orange Avenue, within the district, to a corner store at the edge of the district.



*Flashing lights and signage at a pedestrian crossing near the school zone on Harrison Street.*



*Zebra striped pedestrian crosswalk at Oakland Avenue near a well frequented corner store.*

### 3. MacArthur Boulevard

<b>Type of Roadway:</b>	Arterial (primarily one-way in district)
<b>Roadway Width:</b>	25 to 35 feet
<b>Speed Limit:</b>	30 mph
<b>Parking:</b>	Horizontal, on-street
<b>Sidewalk Widths:</b>	5 to 8 feet

#### Pedestrian Facilities:

- ◆ Street trees
- ◆ Sidewalk plaza with a bench at one bus stop
- ◆ Planting strip on west side of the street
- ◆ Soundwall and landscaping on east side to screen freeway
- ◆ Signalized crosswalks at Oakland Avenue, Adams Street (stop signs) and Grand Avenue
- ◆ Two pedestrian bridges over I-580: one at-grade on Adams Street and one on the Van Buren Avenue overpass
- ◆ Pedestrian cut-through to Orange Avenue

There is considerable pedestrian traffic on MacArthur Boulevard even though it is a fast moving roadway and a local reliever route for I-580. Noise and visual impacts from the freeway, along with relatively narrow sidewalks, sparse landscaping and high vehicle volumes on the street itself reduce the attractiveness of the overall environment. However, MacArthur Boulevard provides access to the busy AC Transit 57 bus line, as well as a direct route to Lake Merritt and the Grand Lake retail district. Additionally, the road has two pedestrian bridges across I-580 leading directly to the Rose Garden and elementary school, which are major attractors in the adjacent Grand Lake neighborhood. Access to these attractors seems to outweigh the general unpleasantness of walking on this street.



*Residents often take the pedestrian bridge from MacArthur Boulevard over I-580 to access the Rose Garden and other amenities in the adjacent neighborhood.*



*Street trees and a soundwall along MacArthur Boulevard help buffer pedestrians from noisy traffic on the adjacent Interstate.*





*A landscaped median on Bay Place narrows the roadway and adds street trees, making the wide road more comfortable for pedestrians.*

#### 4. Bay Place

<b>Type of Roadway:</b>	Arterial
<b>Roadway Width:</b>	61 to 100 feet
<b>Speed Limit:</b>	30 mph
<b>Average Roadway Speeds:</b>	30 to 45 mph
<b>Parking:</b>	Horizontal, on-street and lot
<b>Sidewalk Widths:</b>	9 feet

#### **Pedestrian Facilities:**

- ◆ Street trees
- ◆ Median with landscaping and standard light fixtures
- ◆ Yellow striped crosswalks at all intersections
- ◆ Signalized crosswalks at Grand Avenue and Harrison Street



Bay Place connects Harrison Street with Grand Avenue and provides a pleasant walking route to Lake Merritt and Westlake Junior High School. Although high-speed vehicle traffic is significant on Bay Place, traffic impacts are mitigated by the landscaped median, relatively wide sidewalks and street trees. A new Whole Foods grocery store is planned to open on Bay Place at Harrison Street, which will further increase pedestrian travel in this area, but also increase vehicular traffic.

*Bay Place branches off Grand Avenue providing a pedestrian and vehicle connection to Harrison and 27<sup>th</sup> Streets.*



## 5. Orange Avenue

<b>Type of Roadway:</b>	Local Street
<b>Roadway Width:</b>	45 to 50 feet
<b>Speed Limit:</b>	25 mph
<b>Average Roadway Speeds:</b>	15 to 30 mph
<b>Parking:</b>	On-street
<b>Sidewalk Widths:</b>	8 to 10 feet

### Pedestrian Facilities:

- ◆ Street trees, landscaped yards and building entrances
- ◆ Speed bumps with zebra striping and 15 mph speed limit
- ◆ White-striped crosswalks at the Perkins Street/Harrison Street intersection
- ◆ Pedestrian cut-through to Oakland Avenue

Orange Avenue is a major pedestrian path from the northwest side of the district to Harrison Street, downtown, MacArthur Boulevard and the AC Transit 57 bus route. The speed bumps and posted 15 mph signs slow car traffic to acceptable speeds to make pedestrian travel comfortable.

*A pedestrian path connects Orange Avenue to Harrison Street just below the corner market (pictured on page 9).*



*Speed bumps with cautionary signage slow traffic on Orange Avenue.*





*Both Perkins and Euclid Avenue (shown here) lead to Grand Avenue and provide access to Lake Merritt. Speed bumps on both streets slow traffic and improve the walking environment.*



*Perkins Avenue, like many streets in the district, has very attractively landscaped yards and interesting façades that engage pedestrians and make an appealing walking environment.*

## 6. Euclid Avenue and Perkins Street

<b>Type of Roadway:</b>	Local Street
<b>Roadway Width:</b>	40 feet
<b>Speed Limit:</b>	25 mph
<b>Average Roadway Speeds:</b>	20 to 30 mph
<b>Parking:</b>	Horizontal, on-street
<b>Sidewalk Widths:</b>	8 to 10 feet (no landscaped buffer), 6 feet (with landscaped buffer)

### Pedestrian Facilities:

- ◆ Intermittent landscaped buffer strip between sidewalk and roadway
- ◆ White-striped crosswalks at Perkins Street and Grand Avenue, Adams Street, Van Buren Avenue and Orange Street, and at Euclid Avenue and Grand Avenue
- ◆ Speed bumps with zebra striping and 15 mph speed limit
- ◆ Landscaped yards and building entrances
- ◆ Stop signs at all intersections except Grand Avenue, which has a signal, and Euclid Avenue/Burk Street that has neither

Euclid Avenue and Perkins Street have considerable and consistent pedestrian usage because they provide direct routes from the neighborhood residences to Lake Merritt and retail on Grand Avenue.

## 7. Van Buren Avenue and Adams Street

<b>Type of Roadway:</b>	Local Street
<b>Roadway Width:</b>	40 feet
<b>Speed Limit:</b>	25 mph
<b>Average Roadway Speeds:</b>	15 to 25 mph
<b>Parking:</b>	On-street
<b>Sidewalk Widths:</b>	8 to 10 feet (no landscaped buffer), 6 feet (with landscaped buffer)

### Pedestrian Facilities:

- ◆ Intermittent landscaped buffer strip between sidewalk and roadway
- ◆ White-striped crosswalks at the Perkins Street and MacArthur Boulevard intersections with both streets
- ◆ Street trees
- ◆ Landscaped yards and building entrances
- ◆ Stop signs at all intersections

Van Buren Avenue and Adams Street provide access to MacArthur Boulevard and the amenities beyond. Both streets have pedestrian bridges that connect the Adams Point neighborhood to key landmarks in the Grand Lake neighborhood on the opposite side of I-580. From the Adams Street pedestrian bridge, which also allows vehicle traffic, there is direct access to the Rose Garden. The Van Buren Avenue pedestrian bridge terminates behind Lakeside Elementary School and not far from the Grand Lake retail district.



*Van Buren Avenue is a major pedestrian route because it is relatively flat compared to other district streets and provides a connection to the lake and MacArthur Boulevard.*



*Adams Street also connects the residential district to MacArthur Boulevard and the nearby neighborhoods. Wide, landscaped medians make the street particularly attractive.*



*Speed bumps slow traffic coming from Grand Avenue (just outside of the picture) to the residential uses (shown above).*



*Lee Street provides direct access to Lake Merritt's greenery as well as shops on Grand Avenue; the crosswalk shown here across Grand is unsignalized.*

## 8. Lee Street

<b>Type of Roadway:</b>	Local Street (one-way)
<b>Roadway Width:</b>	35 feet
<b>Speed Limit:</b>	25 mph
<b>Average Roadway Speeds:</b>	15 to 25 mph
<b>Parking:</b>	On-street
<b>Sidewalk Widths:</b>	8 to 10 feet (no landscaped buffer), 6 feet (with landscaped buffer)

### Pedestrian Facilities:

- ◆ Intermittent landscaped buffer strip between sidewalk and roadway
- ◆ Speed bumps with zebra striping and 15 mph speed limit
- ◆ Landscaped yards and building entrances
- ◆ White-striped crosswalks at intersections with Montecito Avenue, Vernon Street and Grand Avenue.
- ◆ Stop signs at Van Buren and Grand Avenues

Lee Street also provides a pedestrian path to Lake Merritt and to retail on Grand Avenue from residential areas in Adams Point. Vehicle traffic is slow because of speed bumps and the narrower width of the roadway. This route also provides fewer options for through traffic and thus has lower vehicle volumes.



## HERCULES WATERFRONT DISTRICT

**Typology:** Suburban Residential

**Location:** Hercules, Contra Costa County

**Size:** Approximately 94 acres

### A. District Boundaries and Location

The Hercules Waterfront District is a developing, master-planned community located along the shore of San Pablo Bay in western Hercules. The district is bounded by San Pablo Bay to the west, Refugio Valley to the north, San Pablo Avenue to the east and Hercules' older, traditional single-family housing subdivisions to the south.

As seen in Figure 3-3, the Hercules Waterfront District is located in a suburban bedroom community just off of Interstate 80 (I-80) near the western terminus of State Route 4 (SR 4). The master-planned Waterfront District has been designed using new urbanist and transit-oriented development (TOD) principles, meaning the district has been built with relatively high-density housing and a mix of uses, and supports public transportation by creating active pedestrian environments within walking distance of transit. The Hercules Waterfront District is a unique case study because major components of the project are still either under design and/or construction, with final build out still seven to ten years out. In addition to assessing its current effectiveness as a walkable community, this case study identifies ways the area could become a true pedestrian district in the future and serve as an example for other communities in the Suburban Residential typology.

### B. District Overview

Figure 3-3 also provides an overview of the district, including district boundaries, primary paths of pedestrian travel, the location of major attractors and transit stops, as discussed in more detail below.



*The Central Hercules District Regulating Codes has resulted in street designs that create a pleasant walkable environment with sidewalks, planting strips and attractive lighting.*

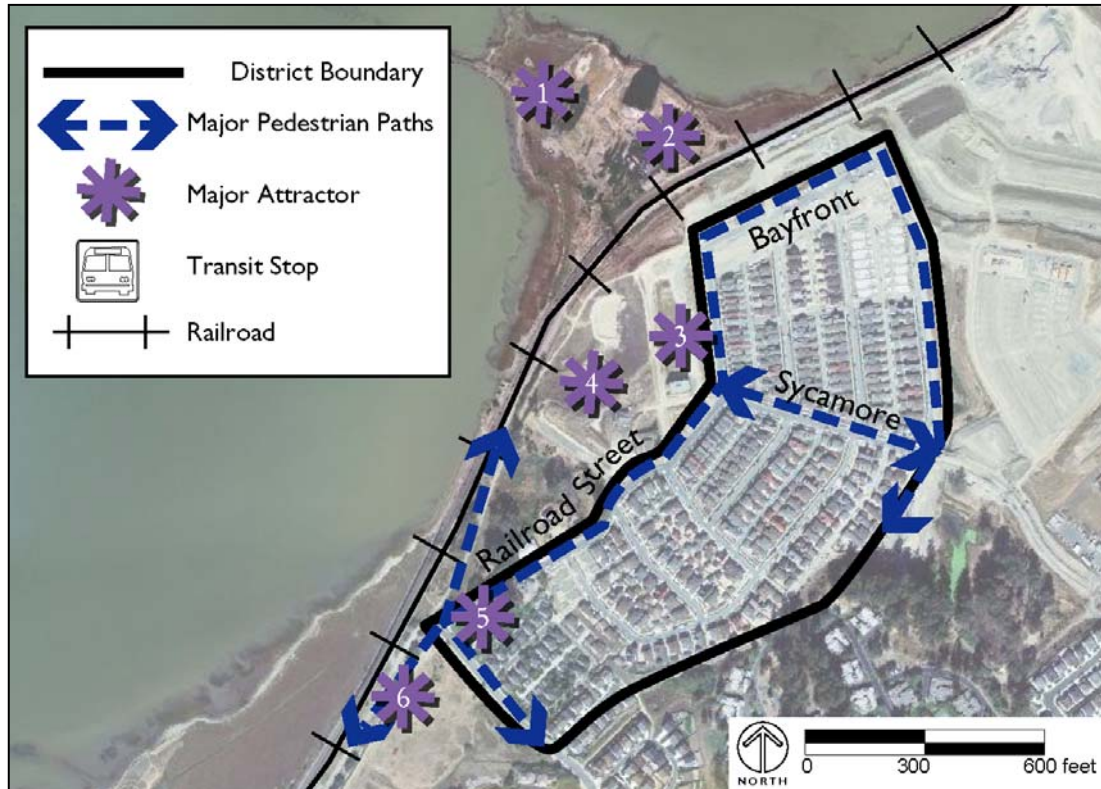


Figure 3-3: Overview of the Hercules Waterfront Pedestrian District

### I. Built Environment

The Hercules Waterfront District consists of four distinct sub-districts: the Central Neighborhood (completed), the Historic Town Center (under construction), the Transit Village (future)—which will be located opposite the railroad tracks to a proposed Amtrak train station (labeled #2 on Figure 3-3), and the Refugio Neighborhood (future).

The Central Neighborhood is comprised of 217 single-family homes covering 47 acres; lot sizes range from 3,000 to 5,500 square feet. When completed, the 21-acre Historic Town Center will consist of approximately 150 live-work units, 45 units of multi-family housing, 85,000 square feet of commercial



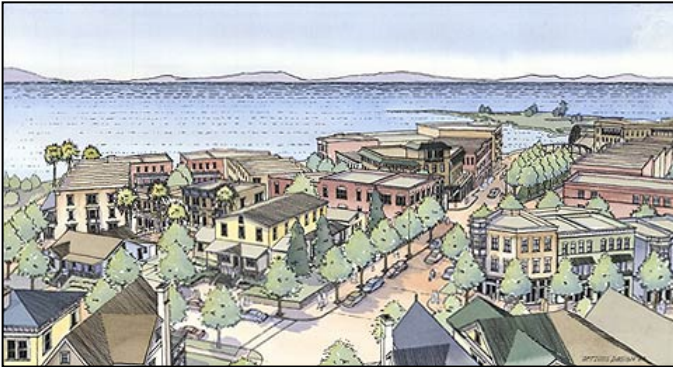
*The Central Neighborhood was designed with a system of alleyways and garages behind the homes, orienting pedestrian activity in front of the homes. It is located adjacent to the San Pablo Shoreline and the San Francisco Bay Trail, both major attractors of pedestrian activity.*

space and 45,000 square feet of civic space. The Town Center will be located within walking distance of the planned ferry landing and train station, which are proposed along the shoreline of San Pablo Bay. The planned Transit Village, which will encompass 16 acres, is zoned for multi-family housing (420-460 apartments) and a mixed-use commercial area. Finally, the 10-acre Refugio Neighborhood will be zoned for single-family housing, but is proposed to consist of 78 single-family houses, 64 cottages constructed behind single family homes as in-law units and 14 townhouses.

## **2. Major Attractors**

There are several major attractors proposed for the developing Waterfront District, which are shown on Figure 3-3 and numbered as follows:

1. A planned ferry terminal
2. A planned Amtrak station
3. Future retail at Railroad Street and Sycamore Avenue
4. Future civic uses in the Historic Town Center
5. A community park located at the corner of Railroad Avenue and Santa Fe Avenue\*
6. The Bay Trail along San Pablo Bay shoreline\*



*Illustrative rendering of the Historic Town Center. The planned retail and civic uses will attract local residents and visitors, increase pedestrian activity and improve Hercules' tax base.*

\*The park and Bay Trail are existing attractors that draw pedestrian activity throughout the day, with spikes during the evening hours and on weekends.

### **3. Transit Service**

Currently, the Hercules Waterfront District is not served by fixed-route transit service. The closest bus stops are located approximately one mile from the district, on San Pablo Avenue. The Hercules Transit Center, also located on San Pablo Avenue, is approximately 1.8 miles away near the I-80/SR 4 interchange. The West Contra Costa Transit Authority (WestCat)

provides transit service to the Hercules Transit Center; headways generally range between 15 to 30 minutes, with slightly longer headways for inter-regional service. The Transit Center includes a park-and-ride lot with more than 250 parking spaces, bus shelters and bicycle parking.

While fixed-route transit service does not currently serve the Waterfront District, transit is an integral component of the developing project. The district's housing and mixed-use developments have been planned around two major transit projects: Amtrak's Capitol Corridor commuter rail service and ferry service from Hercules to San Francisco. Both transit stations will be located within walking distance of the Waterfront District. In 2006 or 2007, rail service is expected to begin with the development of a planned Amtrak Station along the shoreline. Ferry service is expected to begin with planning and design of the terminal in 2010 or 2011 and initial service beginning in 2012.

### **4. Pedestrian Paths of Travel**

The main pedestrian routes in the district are along Railroad Street, a local street/residential collector that skirts the Central Neighborhood and will provide access to the Historic Town Center, Sycamore Avenue, a local street that bisects the Central Neighborhood, and the San Francisco Bay Trail,

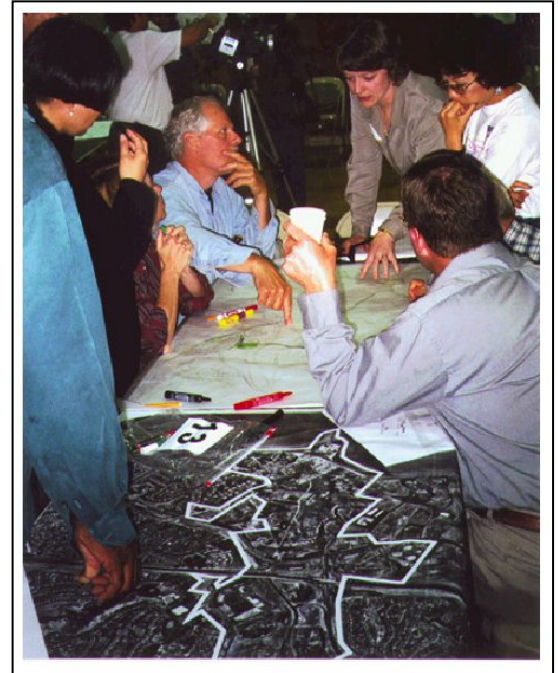


which extends along the shoreline of San Pablo Bay adjacent to the District. Pedestrian activity is currently light in the Central Neighborhood as residents stroll the neighborhood throughout the day with greater activity occurring on weekends. Activity levels are expected to increase as the build-out of additional project phases occurs and the transit infrastructure is secured. A major pedestrian path is likely to develop, when the district is complete, from the residential development to the planned ferry terminal.

### C. Planning History

The City of Hercules thrived as a company town since its founding in 1881 until the closure of its main manufacturing company in the late 1970s. In the 1980s the land around the closed factory was converted into residential uses and Hercules developed into a typical auto-oriented, low-density bedroom community with segregated land uses, minimal civic spaces and no town center.

With its main economic base gone, little commercial enterprise, and no town center or sense of place, Hercules struggled for years to secure sufficient tax revenues to support public services. With a financial crisis looming, the City needed to take action. In 1999, the City led a highly publicized design charrette to develop a community vision. More than 300 members of the community, along with City officials and staff, embraced the principles of new urbanism, traditional neighborhood development and TOD. The process led to the development of design guidelines and a form-based zoning ordinance for the district, both of which have enabled the development of the master-planned Hercules Waterfront neighborhood. The regulations encourage mixed-use development, prioritize pedestrian and bicycle transit, and integrate public transit. All of these features are incorporated into the design of the new community, which will include a ferry terminal and train station, as well as retail and civic uses to create a sustainable economic base. With its access to transit, mix of uses and pedestrian infrastructure, the Waterfront



*Hands-on design charrettes and workshops held throughout the development of the Central Hercules Plan, drew hundreds of citizens from the community.*



*The Waterfront district site plan shows the relative densities and relationship of uses proposed for the district.*

District can serve as a model of pedestrian oriented development for other suburban communities in the Bay Area.

#### D. Regulatory Framework

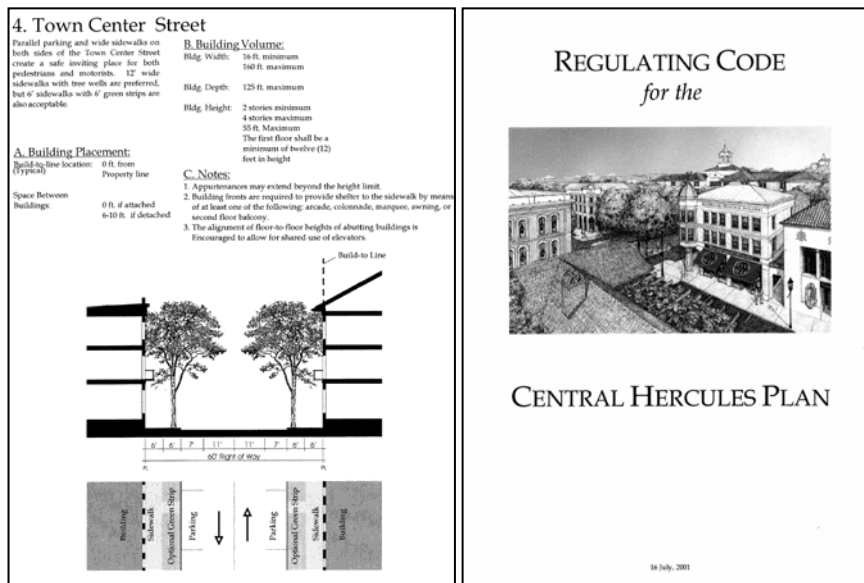
The *2001 Central Hercules Plan* was crafted to guide the development of approximately 430 acres in Central Hercules, including the Waterfront Neighborhood pedestrian district. The Plan envisions a pedestrian-oriented district with a strong city center, access to major transit resources and recreation in the Waterfront community.

To implement the Central Hercules Plan, the District Regulating Code was adopted as a chapter in the City's Zoning Ordinance. The Regulating Code acts as the blueprint for development in the Central Hercules Plan Area. Development in the rest of the City falls under the community's existing Zoning Ordinance. The intent of the Regulating Code is to provide a framework and design criteria to implement the principles of the *2001 Central Hercules Plan*. The code explicitly allows

increased densities in mixed use areas and a streamlined review of the development process in Central Hercules including an administrative environmental review when projects meet code specifications and an accelerated design review process conducted by staff. In addition, the Code contains design guidelines based on street type, which address lot configuration, building placement, building volume and architectural details.

Together, the Central Hercules Plan documents comprise a "typological urban design code." Hercules is the first California city to enact such a code.

**METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION**  
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CASE STUDIES AND COST ESTIMATES



*Hercules' Regulating Code was the first 'Typological Urban Design Code' in California. The code includes a definition of street types used to guide street design.*

## E. Key Findings

This section explores the key factors that contribute to the area's pedestrian orientation and factors that could help it further develop into a true pedestrian district. Findings are based on field observations as well as interviews with City of Hercules planning staff.

Currently, the only existing portion of the Waterfront District is the Central Neighborhood. The density and pedestrian accommodations provided in this neighborhood, which include a complete network of sidewalks and amenities such as street trees, landscaping, and pedestrian scale lighting, contribute to its success as a pedestrian district. However, the functionality of the larger Waterfront District cannot be fully evaluated until major commercial, civic and transit features have been constructed. When build-out is complete the district will likely attract pedestrians in much greater numbers and function

more fully as a complete pedestrian district. The following factors are most important for the successful completion of the pedestrian district:

- ◆ Form Based Zoning enacted through the City's District Regulating Code allows for a mix of uses oriented towards pedestrian activity.
- ◆ Streets have been designed using principles that are meant to lower speeds and encourage bicycle and pedestrian use, including narrow street widths, one way couplets, parking restrictions, chicanes and alleyways.
- ◆ Pedestrian features, including a continuous sidewalk system, street trees, pedestrian scale lighting and landscaping, create an attractive and walkable streetscape.
- ◆ Implementation of transit infrastructure, including the construction of the Amtrak station and ferry terminal.

In addition to the improvements already planned for the Waterfront District the following additional changes or improvements could be made:

- ◆ Fixed route transit service should be provided to the Central Neighborhood.
- ◆ The Bay Trail is a tremendous recreational resource in the district; efforts should be made to better incorporate the resource.
- ◆ Although traffic volumes are low, crosswalks should be added within the residential neighborhood to indicate to vehicles that they have entered into a high pedestrian activity area and that pedestrian travel is a priority.

#### **F. Pedestrian Environment and Facilities**

The following section describes the pedestrian environment in detail by focusing on the primary paths of travel in the district, the size of the roadway or pedestrian space, and the pedestrian facilities along each roadway.



### ***I. Railroad Avenue***

<b>Type of Roadway:</b>	Local Street
<b>Roadway Width:</b>	34 feet
<b>Speed Limit:</b>	25 mph
<b>Average Roadway Speeds:</b>	25 to 35 mph
<b>Parking:</b>	Horizontal, on-street
<b>Sidewalk Widths:</b>	5 feet

**Pedestrian Facilities:**

- ◆ Sidewalks
- ◆ Landscaped buffer
- ◆ Street trees and plantings
- ◆ Pedestrian-scale lighting fixtures
- ◆ One chicane, just north of Santa Fe Road at the beginning of the residential portion



*The Historic Town Center is seen under construction on Railroad.*

Railroad Avenue is a local street that provides access to and from the Hercules Waterfront District to services, transit and outlying neighborhoods in the greater community. Five-foot sidewalks facilitate pedestrian travel within the Central Neighborhood. Light pedestrian activity is present throughout the day, and residents use Railroad Avenue in combination with other local streets as a recreational loop.

Upon completion, mixed-use commercial and civic buildings in the Historic Town Center will front Railroad Avenue and draw larger volumes of pedestrian traffic from the Waterfront District and outlying neighborhoods.



*Sycamore Avenue is a residential collector in the Central Neighborhood.*

## 2. Sycamore Avenue

<b>Type of Roadway:</b>	Local Street
<b>Roadway Width:</b>	34 feet
<b>Speed Limit:</b>	25 mph
<b>Average Roadway Speeds:</b>	25to 35 mph
<b>Parking:</b>	Horizontal, on-street
<b>Sidewalk Widths:</b>	5 feet

### **Pedestrian Facilities:**

- ◆ Sidewalks
- ◆ Street trees and plantings
- ◆ Pedestrian-scale lighting

Sycamore Avenue is a local street that bisects the Central Neighborhood. As a neighborhood connector, Sycamore Avenue carries residential traffic, provides sidewalks for light pedestrian activity and includes on-street parking.

### 3. Bay Trail

<b>Type of Roadway:</b>	N/A
<b>Roadway Width:</b>	N/A
<b>Speed Limit:</b>	N/A
<b>Average Roadway Speeds:</b>	N/A
<b>Parking:</b>	N/A
<b>Sidewalk Widths:</b>	10 feet

**Pedestrian Facilities:**

- ◆ Multi-use pathway
- ◆ Benches
- ◆ Trash receptacles

The San Francisco Bay Trail is a planned recreational corridor that, when complete, will encircle San Francisco and San Pablo Bays with a continuous 400-mile network of bicycling and hiking trails. Approximately three-quarters of a mile of this off-street recreational trail is being developed along the San Pablo Bay in Hercules. The 10-foot wide multi-use pathway, which extends between the Waterfront District and the Pinole Bayfront Park, draws pedestrians and bicyclists from throughout the area. Activity is highest during the mornings, evenings and on weekends when residents and visitors use the trail for recreation.



*The San Francisco Bay Trail borders the western edge of the Waterfront District along the San Pablo Bay Shoreline.*

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